National survey on manuscripts

625. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had taken a decision to undertake a national survey on manuscripts;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government had conducted a pilot survey that unearthed about seven lakh manuscripts from fifty three districts across three States; and

(d) if so, the detail thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The National Mission for Manuscripts have set up 27 Manuscript Resource Centres and 20 Manuscript Conservation Centres in the country. The Mission has taken up the task of evolving a national electronic database on manuscripts which integrates information pertaining to different aspects of manuscriptology. The database integrates information on (i) National Register for Manuscript (ii) Directory of Partner Institutions (iii) Directory of individual collections and (iv) Directory of catalogues.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) In November-December, 2004, the National Mission for Manuscripts launched a pilot survey in 53 districts — 10 in Bihar, 13 in UP and 30 in Orissa. The Survey brought into light 6.5 lakhs manuscripts from 35,000 depositories ranging from private homes, small mathas, Madrasas, Bhandars and other religious institutions and libraries. Of the 6.5 lakhs manuscripts, 1.5 lakhs were located in Bihar, 2 lakhs in UP and 3 lakhs in Orissa.

Devastation of ancient monuments

626. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Archaeological Survey of India does not respond immediately to representations on devastation of old monuments, old structures, temples, etc., in different parts of the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the ASI has shown a very casual attitude towards representations of this nature;

(c) whether Government have taken steps to keep the ASI on constant alert; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps that will be taken to ensure that there is immediate response to complaints against devastation of ancient monuments in the country?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) No Sir, Archaeological Survey of India responds urgently to such representations in respect of all protected monuments.

(b) No sir, as stated above, prompt action is taken on such representations.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Development in NER

627. SHRI KARENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Prime Minister, during his recent visit to Assam, has firmly stated that Centre is committed for improving the road, rail and air connectivity and also the tele-communication network in the North-Eastern Region;

(b) if so, how the required finance is expected to be arranged for implementation of the commitment; and

(c) whether there is any time-frame for the much needed improvement?

THE MINISTER OF THE MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) Specific steps taken by the concerned Ministries/ Departments for improving the road, rail and air connectivity, tele-communication network and media coverage in the North-Eastern Region are as under:

(i) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has proposed to implement "Special Accelerated Road Development Programme" for improving the road connectivity in the North Eastern Region for which a special allocation has been proposed in the budget for 2005-06. Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region